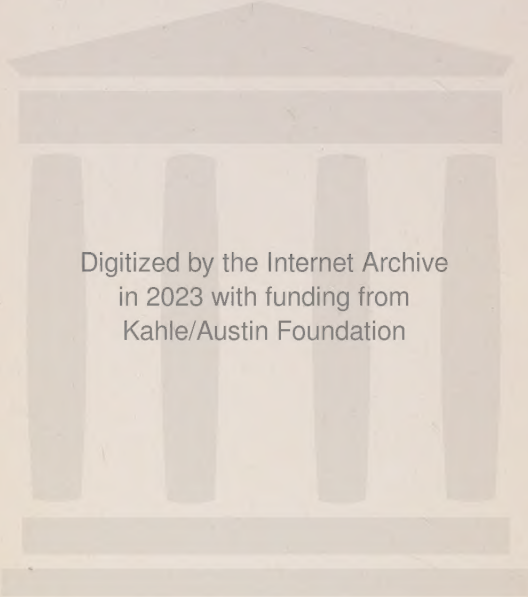


GRACE BEFORE MEAT

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

Amos R. Wells



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Grace before Meat

A COLLECTION OF TABLE BLESSINGS FOR
ALL OCCASIONS

BY
AMOS R. WELLS



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United Society of Christian Endeavor

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ASKING A BLESSING.

THE custom of "Grace before meat" is beautifully natural. Our food, received daily and at regular intervals, is the most conspicuous and constant reminder of our Father's loving care and beneficent provision for our wants. It means to us the continuance of life and all that life means, or ought to mean, to us. It has been taken up into the loftiest of all symbolism—the Bread of Life, the Water of Life, the Lord's Supper. If at any time of the day public thanksgiving is to be given to God by our Christian families, it should be at their meals.

"Grace before meat" is also an indispensable mode of testimony. It marks off Christian households from those that are not Christian, or are Christian less in devout reality than in name. If visitors are present, it declares at once and in the most quiet and modest of ways the position of the family in religious matters. Before the children it is a daily training in reverence and gratitude, and in the expression of these Christian graces. Nay, the head of the family, the father or

mother or whoever performs this sacred office, becomes more grateful and cheerful because of the continual offering of outward thanks to the Giver of all good.

Of course the chief argument for the custom of "Grace before meat" is the example of our Lord Himself. It is said of Him that He blessed the lad's fishes and barley cakes before breaking and giving them to the multitude whom He miraculously fed. He was known by the two at Emmaus by the well-known manner of His blessing and breaking the bread. These incidental and matter-of-course references show that "saying grace" was Christ's invariable habit, as it should be the invariable habit of those who in all things are to follow Christ's example.

A number of useful, subordinate results flow from this practice, not the least of which is the promptness in coming to the table, and regularity in the time of meals, which it promotes. Indeed, it is the one act (next, perhaps, to the custom of family prayers) which binds the family together in a recognized, organic whole.

And "Grace before meat" becomes the easy beginning of family prayers. Courage

for this slight service grows into courage for the longer and more difficult task. I know one family—a minister's—that always have family prayers at the table,—sometimes before the meal, sometimes after it; and there are many such families.

Who should “ask the blessing”? Plainly, the head of the family, the husband and father, if he will. He is, or should be, the priest of the household. But if he will not, or thinks he cannot, do not for that reason allow it to fail, but let him call upon this one or that, his wife or one of the children, to perform the service. And in any event, though the father most commonly asks the blessing, he should occasionally obtain that service from his wife and from the children themselves. No better training in Christian expression and public prayer is imaginable. For this reason I have included in this little book some simple graces for children to repeat.

I believe especially in the frequent concert repetition of the blessing. It draws the family wonderfully together, and gives each member of it more confidence for this separate performance of the service.

A model blessing must be brief, especially

for the sake of the wriggling, impatient children. It must be pointed, comprehensive, and rememberable. It must contain at least a recognition of God as the Giver of good, and an expression of gratitude to Him. If the element of petition is added, it is most naturally a prayer for wisdom and strength in using the gifts God provides, in the way God wishes.

Every Christian should train himself so that he is able to ask a blessing in his own words, because many occasions arise when special references in the blessing would be helpful, if, indeed, they are not really necessary. Original blessings, however, are more easily given if one's memory is well stocked with the forms found useful by others, and therefore I recommend that a large number of the blessings given in this book be committed carefully to memory, and used often enough to become thoroughly familiar.

Perhaps a caution might well be given in regard to asking strangers to ask the blessing. If the stranger is to be in the family for more than one meal, it is best for the head of the family to ask the blessing himself at the first meal, thus showing his colors. In

no case should the stranger be requested to ask the blessing unless you are certain that he would be willing and glad to do so.

In this service, perhaps above all other religious services, the danger of monotony is greatest, because the service is so brief and it is so easy always to say the same form of words till the long-accustomed syllables have ceased to bear much meaning, have become mere sounds. That is why I give in this book so great a variety, and urge that every family make use in turn of all the modes here indicated.

Sometimes the head of the family will say, "Let us have a silent blessing to-day." This "Quaker blessing," as it is called, consists of the reverent bowing of the head while each person present thanks God in his own way, and offers up his personal prayer.

Sometimes the head of the family will say, "To-day let us sing Milton's blessing," and all will join in carolling the stanzas from Milton's lovely hymn given in this book. A blessing, sung after the old monkish fashion, is always impressive and enjoyable.

Or the head of the household may say, "We will use Hannah More's blessing this

evening," and the family, who have committed it to memory, will repeat it in concert, with bowed heads. I have given a number of blessings taken from the writings of various masters of devotion, and from collections of prayers, like the Episcopal Prayer Book and "Sacra Privata."

If there is some other language than your own that is understood by all present, a blessing said in that language by all together will be a pleasing and impressive change. This will be especially interesting to the children as they are studying Latin and Greek, German and French, in school and college, so that I have devoted a little space to Bible blessings in other tongues. A wall roll, on which a number of forms of blessings have been printed in large letters, may be useful as an aid to these concert "graces."

The Bible is full of verses suitable for table use, and I have brought together some of them, urging each Christian to gather more from our one central Seed-Garden of Devotion. The Lord's Prayer, with its petition for daily bread, may well be made a frequent addition to the blessing, and the family should

be ready to join in repeating it as soon as the leader has spoken the first sentence.

Special blessings for special occasions have been prepared for this collection, and I suggest a watchful readiness in the use of them. When a child's birthday is remembered at the table, when a visitor hears himself prayed for, when Easter and Christmas, New Year's and Thanksgiving Day, and the blessed recurrence of the Sabbath are thus signalized, not only does the act of asking a blessing receive a fresh significance, but special comfort and inspiration may be given.

The custom of "returning thanks" is not so common as it formerly was. We include the thanks in our "Grace before meat." But it is a lovely custom that might well be revived, and to that end I have added a few "*Graces after meat*" to this collection.

Perhaps it may be well enough to say that, with the exception of some brief forms obviously common, whatever in this collection is not attributed to others is original with myself.

May this little book prove to be an aid in many a Christian home, and may it lead to

the establishment of this gracious service in many a household where hitherto the voice of praise has not been heard.

AMOS R. WELLS.

Boston.

FOR ANY TIME.

OUR FATHER in heaven, we thank Thee for all Thy kindness to us. Help us to serve Thee with all Thou dost give us. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



MAKE this house a Bethany, our Saviour. Sit with us at the table. Draw us from our worldly cares, as Thou didst draw Martha. Be our life, as Thou wert the life of Lazarus. Show us, as Thou didst Mary, the better part. We ask it in Thy name. Amen.



IN THEE, O God, we live and move and have our being. Thou didst create us, and Thou dost uphold us, and without Thee we are nothing. We bless Thee for this food, the token of Thy continued care for us. We take it as a gift from Thy hand of love, and we pray Thee for wisdom that we may spend the strength it gives us in ways that will best please Thee. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

BLESSED GIVER of all good, we acknowledge with grateful hearts the many blessings Thou hast bestowed upon us. We do not deserve the least of all Thy kindness. Grant us Thy strength, dear Lord, that we may employ more worthily in Thy service all the good things Thou dost give us. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



OUR SAVIOUR, as Thou wert known at Emmaus in the breaking of the bread, so make Thyself known at this table. Sit at our meal, and it will be a feast indeed. Amen.



SAY TO US, blessed Jesus, as Thou didst say to Zaccheus, "To-day I must abide at thy house." We receive Thee proudly and gladly. Thou art a welcome guest. Nay, it is Thine own table, which Thou hast spread for us, and we are Thy guests, Lord Jesus. To Thee be praise forever. Amen.

OUR FATHER, we pray that Thou wilt bless this food to our use, and bless to our use all Thy good gifts. For Christ's sake. Amen.



DEAR LORD, as Thou didst prepare that breakfast for Thy disciples upon the shore of Galilee, so truly hast Thou prepared this breakfast for us, Thy children. We thank Thee for Thy thought of us, so kind and so unceasing. We would go through all this day in the thought of Thee. Help us to do a day's work that shall make Thee glad. In Thy name. Amen.



OTHOU who didst bid Thy disciples remember Thee as they broke bread and drank, we, too, would do this in remembrance of Thee. Make our every meal a communion with Thee. May we see Thee in all these evidences of Thy love for us, and seeing Thee, may we obey Thee, and adore. Amen.

WHETHER we eat or drink, O God, or whatever we do, we would do it as to Thee. Thou hast given us all these blessings, and we praise Thy holy name. Grant us Thy grace, dear Father, that we may be good stewards of Thy bounty. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



MAY we never be unmindful of Thee, O God, who art never unmindful of us. Wilt Thou accept our heart's thanksgiving. In Jesus' name. Amen.



TO BE SAID IN CONCERT.

LORD, we thank Thee for this food
And for all things fair and good.
Help us, Lord, in Thee to rest,
Knowing that Thy will is best.
When Thy holy laws we break,
Pardon us for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

WHEN A VISITOR IS PRESENT.

LORD, bless this food, and may it minister to our bodily health. Build it up at the same time into spiritual power. Bless our household, and the guest who sits with us at the table. Guide us through our lives till we all sit together at the marriage supper of Thy Son. We ask it in His name. Amen.



FOR A CHURCH SUPPER.

LORD, it is good for brethren to dwell together in unity! Be at this feast, as Thou didst love to be at feasts of neighbors on the earth. Enrich our joy, even as Thou art always ready to sanctify our sorrows. Receive our thanksgiving for this food, and for the goodly church home Thou hast given us. Bind our hearts together with increasing love for one another and for Thee. We ask it in Thy blessed name, Lord Jesus. Amen.

FOR A BIRTHDAY.

WE thank Thee for this food, our Father, and for all the mercies Thou dost vouchsafe to this household. Especially to-day we thank Thee for the life of whose birthday this is the anniversary. Wilt Thou not in Thy gracious providence prolong that life for many years, and fill it with all holiness and happiness. We ask it for Jesus' sake. Amen.



FOR A TIME OF SICKNESS.

AS we thank Thee for this food, our Saviour, and for all Thy kindness to us, we bring before Thee the member of our household who is not present. Be in the sickroom with healing even as Thou art here with strengthening, and show Thyself the Good Physician as Thou didst in Palestine. We ask it in Thy name. Amen.

FOR A PUBLIC DINNER.

ALMIGHTY GIVER of good, we praise Thee for Thy kindness to the children of men. Thou openest Thy hand, and we are fed. Thou dost strengthen the body and quicken the mind. Be with this assemblage, we pray Thee, and bless our gathering together. In His name. Amen.



TO USE WHEN A GUEST.

BESTOW Thy richest blessings, our Father, upon this household, and Thy benediction upon this hospitable board. We join together in the adoration of Thee. Thy hand is open, and supplies all our needs. Add to these blessings Thy gracious presence, O Christ, and let us realize Thy smile upon us as we commune with one another. Amen.

FOR AN OUTDOOR GATHERING.

THOU art in Thy beautiful world, O God, and Thou dost speak to us from earth and sky, things fair to look upon and things good for food. We thank Thee for this happy gathering, and for the full provision that lies before us. May we never forget Thee. May we do Thy will. May we receive Thy blessing. In the name of our precious Redeemer. Amen.

FOR THE SABBATH.

SABBATH MORNING.

BLESS to us this Sabbath day, our Father, and go with us through all its hours. As we take this food from Thy hand, so may we receive from Thee the Word of Life to-day. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



SABBATH NOON.

THIS is the Day the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. We will praise Thee for this provision for our bodies, and we will praise Thee for the provision for our souls. May we be built up this day nearer Thy stature, O Christ, and learn what it is to be at one with Thee. Amen.



SABBATH EVENING.

THIS has been a blessed day with Thee, dear Lord. May it be an earnest to us of the unending Sabbath. Be present at our evening meal, and close the day with Thy benediction of peace. Amen.

SABBATH MORNING.

AS we receive these new tokens of Thy love, our Father, we pray for Thy blessing on this Thy day. Especially, be pleased to grace Thy house with Thy presence, uphold our pastor as he presents Thy message, and enable us to feed upon that truth. In the name of our Lord. Amen.



SABBATH NOON.

WE praise Thee for the food for the body which we are to receive, and for the spiritual food which Thou hast given us in the sanctuary. Grant that we may grow into all strength, body and spirit, through the love of Christ our Saviour. Amen.



SABBATH EVENING.

WHEREIN we have not spent this Sabbath well, wilt Thou forgive us, merciful Saviour. For all the good we have received during its sacred hours, and for this latest blessing of food, we offer Thee our glad thanksgiving. So lead us ever into the Sabbath that has no end. Amen.

FOR TIMES OF DAY.

FOR THE MORNING MEAL.

WE bless Thee, our Father, for the rest of the night and the new strength of the day. We bless Thee for these morning tokens of Thy love for us. And we would receive them with gratitude, and go forth to use them in Thy service. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



THOU hast brought us, O God, to the beginning of a new day. Thou dost stand ready to bless us. We thank Thee for this food. May it be to us the symbol of Thy care for us, and may we never forget Thee through the coming hours of labor and enjoyment. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.



OUR Father in heaven, bless our morning meal. Help us to do Thy will to-day, for Christ's sake. Amen.

FOR THE MIDDAY MEAL.

IN the midst of our work, dear Saviour, we gather around this table which is Thine. Thou hast covered it with Thy kindness, and we praise Thee for Thy gifts to us. Transform this food into strength, O Lord, and the strength into noble service. We ask it in Thy name. Amen.



WE would not forget Thee, our Father, though the cares and the work of the world press upon us; but in the midst of them we pause to bless Thee for Thy continual watch over us, and for this provision of Thy bounty. Thou wilt not cease to bless us, we know. May we never cease to praise Thee, and to do Thy will. For the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR THE EVENING MEAL.

HOW have we lived to-day, Lord Jesus? What hast Thou seen amiss in us? Oh, forget it! What good have we accomplished? To Thee be the glory. Join us, we pray Thee, in our evening meal, and make this table joyous with Thy presence. Amen.



THIS has been Thy day, our Saviour. Thou hast preserved us from harm, Thou hast strengthened us for our tasks, Thou hast not for a moment forsaken us. To Thy name be endless praises. And now we bless Thee for this food and for all the mercies with which Thou wilt crown the day, for the comforts of our home, for the love that binds us together, and for the coming gift of sleep. Amen.



THY mercies, O Lord, are new every morning and fresh every evening. Help us to receive them all as from Thee, and use them in Thy service. For Christ's sake. Amen.

FOR HOLIDAYS.

FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

AS we meet to partake of Thy good gifts,
O God, we thank Thee for this opening
year, and for all the delights Thou hast
stored in it for Thy children. May we be
Thy children indeed through each day and
hour of the year ahead, Thy children, doing
Thy will and receiving Thy blessing. It can
be only in the strength our Saviour will give
us, and we ask it in His name. Amen.



FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

ON this day of Thy darkness, dear Lord,
how deep should be our gratitude to
Thee! Thou hast given us Thyself. Thou
art always giving us Thyself. Even this
food we eat is a part of Thyself, of Thy love
for us. We praise Thee for Thy death for
the world and Thy continued life in the
world, and we would be Thine forever.
Amen.

FOR EASTER.

IN the body of Thy resurrection, our Master, Thou didst eat and drink with Thy disciples to prove to them our immortality. Come now and be one at our meal, and fill us all, we pray Thee, with the life that is life indeed. For Thy name's sake. Amen.



FOR MEMORIAL DAY.

WE would never forget, our Father, the blessedness of a united country, or the patriots whose devotion, under Thy favoring providence, established this land in freedom and brotherhood. As we eat in the peace they won for us, we thank Thee for them, and pray that we may serve our country with equal zeal. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

FOR THANKSGIVING DAY.

THE year has been full of Thy loving-kindness, O Thou Creator and Sustainer of all. Each season has brought its joys, and Thou hast been in every one of them. Every day we have kept Thanksgiving, because every day has been crowded with Thee. What shall we render unto Thee for all Thy benefits? We shall try to love Thee better, we shall try to trust Thee more fully, we shall try to serve Thee more perfectly. Throughout the coming year be Thou our Rejoicing and our Guide, as in the year that is past. We ask it in the blessed name of Thy Son. Amen.



FOR ANY PATRIOTIC HOLIDAY.

LORD, as we partake of the fruit of the soil, we pray Thee to bless our native land. May our people feed upon the living bread, and may our rulers obtain strength from above. We thank Thee for Thy favor bestowed upon our country, and we ask for new desires to serve it better by serving Thee. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

FOR FOREFATHERS' DAY.

THIS day reminds us, O God, of Thy care that has watched over our nation, from the beginning till now. We praise Thee for the good courage of our fathers, and for Thy good guidance of their ways. We eat in safety and prosperity because Thou wert their God. So wilt Thou be our God, forever and ever. Amen.



FOR CHRISTMAS.

IN this day of giving what can we give Thee, O God, who hast given all things to us? Who didst give us Thy Son on the first Christmas Day, Thy Son, that unspeakable gift. Who day by day through all years art giving Thyself. We take our food from Thy hand, and say "Thank you, Father." Every day is a Christmas tree loaded down, and we say "Thank you, Father." We give Thee our hearts' love on this Christmas Day, our Father, and we will be Thy children forever. Amen.

FOR A CHILD.

DEAR JESUS, we thank Thee for this
food. Bless us and keep us all. Amen.



GOD bless this food, and bless us all,
And keep us safe, whate'er befall.
For Jesus' sake. Amen.



WE thank Thee, Lord, for daily bread,
The blessings on this table spread.
And pray Thee, Lord, that we may be
And do whatever pleases Thee.
For Jesus' sake. Amen.



THY dear hand, O God of love,
Sends these blessings from above.
As we take them gratefully,
We will try to honor Thee.
For Jesus' sake. Amen.

DEAR FATHER in heaven, we owe Thee everything we have. We thank Thee for it all, and we will try to do Thy will. For Jesus' sake. Amen.



OUR FATHER, we love Thee, and we know that Thou dost love us. We bless Thee for Thy goodness in sending us this food, and all that we have. Help us to serve Thee, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

FROM FAMOUS SOURCES.

A PRAYER BY CHRISTINA G.
ROSSETTI.

O LORD, whose way is perfect, help us, we pray Thee, always to trust in Thy goodness: that walking with Thee and following Thee in all simplicity, we may possess quiet and contented minds; and may cast all our care on Thee, for Thou carest for us. Amen.



A PRAYER BY BLAISE PASCAL.

O LORD, let us not henceforth desire, health or life, except to spend them for Thee, with Thee, and in Thee. Thou alone knowest what is good for us; do, therefore, what seemeth Thee best. Give to us, or take from us; conform our wills to Thine; and grant that, with humble and perfect submission, and in holy confidence, we may receive the orders of Thine eternal Providence, and may equally adore all that comes to us from Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A PRAYER BY THOMAS ARNOLD.

O LORD, give Thy blessing, we pray Thee, to our daily work, that we may do it in faith and heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men. All our powers of body and mind are Thine, and we would fain devote them to thy service. Sanctify them, and the work in which they are engaged; let us not be slothful, but fervent in spirit, and do Thou, O Lord, so bless our efforts that they may bring forth in us the fruits of true wisdom. Teach us to seek after truth and enable us to gain it; but grant that we may ever speak the truth in love; that, while we know earthly things, we may know Thee, and be known by Thee, through and in Thy Son Jesus Christ. Give us this day Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be Thine in body and spirit in all our work and all our refreshments, through Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

A PRAYER BY E. B. PUSEY.

WE desire, O God, this day most earnestly to please Thee; to do Thy will in each several thing which Thou shalt give us to do; to bear each thing which Thou shalt allow to befall us contrary to our will, meekly, humbly, patiently, as a gift from Thee to subdue self-will in us, and to make Thy will wholly ours. What we do, make us do simply as Thy children; let us be, throughout the day, as children in their loving father's presence, ever looking up to Thee. May we love Thee for all Thy love. May we thank Thee, if not in words, yet in our hearts, for each gift of Thy love, for each comfort which Thou allowest us day by day. Amen.

A PRAYER BY GEORGE DAWSON.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for the bread of the body that perisheth, and we beseech Thee to give us that bread by which man's higher life is fed, that we, laying hold of the life that never dies, may thereby be fitted for the troubles and burdens of this life, and look forward with joy to the higher and better life. Amen.

A PRAYER BY CHRISTINA G.
ROSSETTI.

LORD, with whom is the fountain of life, give us all, we entreat Thee, grace and good will to follow the leadings of Thy most Holy Spirit. Let the dew of Thy grace descend and abide upon us, refreshing that which droops, reviving that which is ready to perish; until the day when all Thy faithful people shall drink of the river of Thy pleasures. Amen.

A PRAYER BY THOMAS À KEMPIS.

OLORD, Thou knowest what is best for us; let this or that be done, as Thou shalt please. Give what Thou wilt, and how much Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt. Deal with us as Thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth Thee. Set us where Thou wilt, and deal with us in all things just as Thou wilt. Behold, we are Thy servants, prepared for all things; for we desire not to live unto ourselves, but unto Thee; and oh, that we could do it worthily and perfectly! Amen.



A PRAYER BY GELASIUS (A.D. 492).

WE give Thee thanks, Holy Lord, Father Almighty, everlasting God, who hast been pleased to bring us through the night to the hours of morning; we pray Thee to grant us to pass this day without sin, so that at eventide we may again give thanks to Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FROM "PRIVATE DEVOTIONS" (1560).

O GOD, the Father of Lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift; mercifully look upon our frailty and infirmity, and grant us such health of body as Thou knowest to be needful for us; that, both in our bodies and souls, we may evermore serve Thee with all our strength and might; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



A PRAYER BY THOMAS À KEMPIS.

STRENGTHEN us, O God, by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit. Grant us to be strengthened with might in the inner man, and to empty our hearts of all useless care and anguish. O Lord, grant us heavenly wisdom, that we may learn above all things to seek and to find Thee, above all things to relish and to love Thee, and to think of all other things as being, what indeed they are, at the disposal of Thy wisdom. Amen.

A PRAYER BY CHRISTINA G.
ROSSETTI.

O LORD, who dost promise a crown of life to them that love Thee, give us grace to love Thee for what Thou art more than for all which Thou bestowest; and so loving Thee, to endure temptation and finish our course with joy. Amen.



A PRAYER BY E. B. PUSEY.

MAY our whole being, O God, be one thanksgiving unto Thee, may all within us praise Thee and love Thee; for all which Thou hast forgiven, and for all which Thou hast given; for Thine unknown hidden blessings, and for those which, in our negligence or thoughtlessness, we have passed over; for any and every gift of nature or of grace; for our power of loving; for all blessings within and without; and for all which Thou hast yet in store for us; for everything whereby Thou hast drawn us to Thyself, whether joy or sorrow; for all whereby Thou wilt make us Thine own forever. Amen.

A PRAYER BY CHRISTINA G.
ROSSETTI.

O LORD, whom all Thy good creatures bless and praise according to Thy gift unto each of them, grant, we pray Thee, that we on whom Thou hast bestowed reason and speech may ever bless Thee with heart and lips, and may of Thine infinite mercy inherit a blessing, even the eternal blessedness of heaven. Amen.



A PRAYER BY GEORGE DAWSON.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who wast, and art, and art to come, Eternal Home of man, Refuge of the weary, Strength of the weak,—of Thy loving-kindness and tender mercy grant unto us that we, being guided by Thy good Spirit, and coming with lowly hearts unto Thee, may know Thy truth, feel Thy light, drink of the living water, and eat of the bread of heaven; and that, passing through the gate of death, we may enter at last into the life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE "GENERAL THANKSGIVING"
OF THE EPISCOPAL PRAYER
BOOK.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of all mercies, we, Thine unworthy servants, do give Thee most humble and hearty thanks for all Thy goodness and lovingkindness to us, and to all men. We bless Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but, above all, for Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech Thee, give us that due sense of all Thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may show forth Thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to Thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

A PRAYER BY JEREMY TAYLOR,

“Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles the First.”

O ALMIGHTY GOD and gracious Father of men and angels, who openest Thy hand and fillest all things with plenty, and hast provided for Thy servants sufficient to satisfy all our needs; teach us to use Thy creatures soberly and temperately, that we may not make the temptations of our enemy to prevail upon us, or our spirits unapt for the performance of our duty. O God, never suffer that the blessings which Thou givest us may either minister to sin or sickness, but to health and holiness and thanksgiving; that in the strength of Thy provisions we may cheerfully and actively and diligently serve Thee; that we may worthily feast at Thy table here, and be accounted worthy, through Thy grace, to be admitted to Thy table hereafter, at the eternal supper of the Lamb, to sing a hallelujah to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER BY BISHOP THOMAS
WILSON,

Who lived early in the last century.

PRESERVE in our souls, O God, such a constant and clear sense of our obligations to Thee, that upon the receipt of every favor we may immediately turn our eyes to Him from whom cometh our salvation. Let Thy manifold blessings fix such lasting impressions upon our souls that we may always praise Thee faithfully here on earth, until it shall please Thee, of Thy unbounded mercy, to call us nearer the place of Thy heavenly habitation, to praise our Lord and Deliverer to all eternity. Amen.

A PRAYER BY HANNAH MORE.

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, we thank Thee for having preserved us through the past night, and for granting us health and strength for our duties on this day. Blessed be the Lord for all His mercies; for giving us food to eat and raiment to put on, and for delivering us from many evils which our sins have justly deserved. We thank Thee especially, O Lord, for the gift of Jesus Christ, Thy Son. We confess before Thee our exceeding guilt, and we pray Thee, for Christ's sake, to pardon our offences, and to receive our souls when we die. Amen.

TO BE SUNG, OR SAID IN
CONCERT.

FROM JAMES MONTGOMERY'S
HYMN OF PRAISE.

O GOD, Thou art my God alone,
Early to Thee my soul shall cry,
A pilgrim in a land unknown,
A thirsty land where springs are dry.

Praise with my heart, my mind, my voice,
Will I for all Thy mercies give;
My soul shall still in God rejoice,
My tongue shall bless Thee whilst I live.



FROM ST. BERNARD'S HYMN,

Translated by Ray Palmer.

WE taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread!
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the Fountain Head,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

O Jesus! ever with us stay;
Make all our moments calm and bright;
Chase the dark night of sin away;
Shed o'er the world Thy holy light.

FROM A HYMN BY MILTON.

LET us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind:
For His mercies shall endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

All things living He doth feed;
His full hand supplies their need:
For His mercies shall endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

FROM A HYMN BY PHILIP DOD-
DRIDGE.

BY day, by night, at home, abroad,
Still are we guarded by our God;
By His incessant bounty fed,
By His unerring counsel led.

With grateful hearts the past we own;
The future, all to us unknown,
We to Thy guardian care commit,
And, peaceful, leave before Thy feet.

FROM A HYMN BY PHILIP DOD-
DRIDGE.

WITH joy we taste that manna now
Thy mercy scatters down;
We seal our humble vows to Thee,
And wait the promised crown.



FROM A HYMN BY MRS. BARBAULD.

PRAISE to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days;
Bounteous source of every joy!
Let Thy praise our tongues employ;
All to Thee, our God, we owe,
Source whence all our blessings flow.

All the blessings of the fields,
All the stores the garden yields,
For the flocks that roam the plain,
Yellow sheaves of ripened grain,
Lord! for these our souls shall raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise.

FROM A HYMN BY ISAAC WATTS.

MY GOD! how endless is Thy love!
Thy gifts are ev'ry evening new,
And morning mercies from above
Gently distill like early dew.

Thou spread'st the curtain of the night,
Great Guardian of my sleeping hours!
Thy sov'reign word restores the light,
And quickens all my drowsy powers.



FROM A HYMN BY JOSEPH ADDISON.

WHEN all Thy mercies, O my God!
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ;
Nor is the least a cheerful heart
That tastes those gifts with joy.

FROM A HYMN BY ROBERT ROBIN-
SON.

COME, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.

IN BIBLE WORDS.

OTASTE and see that the Lord is good :
blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.
We would trust in the Lord, and do good ;
so shall we dwell in the land, and verily
we shall be fed. Amen.



THOU dost feed us with the finest of the
wheat: and with honey out of the rock
dost Thou satisfy us. Yea, the Lord shall
give that which is good ; and our land shall
yield her increase. Blessed be the Lord, who
daily loadeth us with benefits. Amen.



IT is a good thing to give thanks unto the,
Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name
O Most High : to shew forth Thy loving-
kindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness
every night. Let the people praise
Thee, O God ; let all the people praise Thee.
Then shall the earth yield her increase ; and
God, even our own God, shall bless us.
Amen.

HOW excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make Them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. Amen.



WE laid us down and slept; we awaked; for the Lord sustained us. The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night His song shall be with us. In God have we put our trust. Amen.



THOU visitest the earth, O God, and waterest it; Thou preparest us corn; Thou blessest the springing thereof; Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness. Our souls shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and our mouths shall praise Thee with joyful lips. Amen.

THOU hast opened the doors of heaven,
O God. Thou hast rained down manna
upon us, and given us of the corn of heaven.
We eat angels' food ; Thou sendest us meat
to the full. We have more than heart could
wish. So we Thy people and sheep of Thy
pasture will give Thee thanks forever. Amen.



THE Lord is our shepherd ; we shall not
want. He maketh us to lie down in green
pastures : He leadeth us beside the still
waters. He prepareth a table before us. Our
cup runneth over. We will bless the Lord
at all times : His praise shall continually be
in our mouths. Amen.



O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for He is
good : for His mercy endureth forever.
He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the
hungry soul with goodness. Be Thou exalted,
O God, above the heavens : and Thy glory
above all the earth. Amen.

BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits : who satisfieth thy mouth with good things ; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. Thou wilt shew us the path of life : in Thy presence is fulness of joy ; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Amen.



BLESS the Lord, O my soul. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man : that He may bring forth food out of the earth. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger : but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. We will sing unto the Lord, because He hath dealt bountifully with us. We will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy. Amen.

IN OTHER TONGUES.

A BIBLE GRACE IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

[From Psalms 136 and 29.]

O GIVE thanks unto the God of heaven, who giveth food to all flesh: for His mercy endureth forever. The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace. Amen.



Ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ θεῷ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, τῷ διδόντι τροφήν πάσῃ σαρκί, ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ. Κύριος ἰσχὺν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ δώσει, κύριος εὐλογήσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν εἰρήνῃ. Ἀμήν.



CONFITEMINE DOMINO dominorum, qui dat escam omni carni: quoniam in æternum misericordia ejus. Dominus virtutem populo suo dabit: Dominus benedicet populo suo in pace. Amen.

L OUEZ le Dieu du ciel, qui donne l'aliment à toute chair : parce que sa miséricorde est éternelle. Le Seigneur donnera la force à son peuple ; le Seigneur bénira son peuple en le comptant de sa paix. Amen.




Danket dem Gott vom Himmel, der allem Fleische Speise gibt ; denn seine Güte währet ewiglich. Der Herr wird seinem Volke Kraft geben ; der Herr wird sein Volk segnen mit Frieden. Amen.


GRACE AFTER MEAT.

THE RETURNING OF THANKS.


FOR what we have received, O Lord, we are devoutly thankful. May it be health to our body, as Thy presence is health to our souls. Amen.



THOU hast been very good to us, O Lord, through all our lives, and these are only the latest of countless bounties. To Thee be thanksgiving and glory, world without end. Amen.



LORD, we thank Thee for this meal. We will again set about our tasks; and may it be with the renewed sense of Thy loving presence and Thy tender care. Amen.



WE thank Thee, Jesus, our bountiful Provider, for what Thou hast given us. As Thou hast fed us here, continue to feed us, we pray Thee, with the Bread of Life. Amen.



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